

WASHINGTON, DC- Today, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) announced that two separate grants of \$321,221 each have been awarded to the Metropolitan Medical Response System jurisdictions in Bakersfield and Fresno. These funds are being awarded through the United States Department of Homeland Security Homeland Security Grant Program. These grants are for fiscal year 2008.

"It is vital to have first responders on the scene quickly during a catastrophic event," said Costa. "The better prepared our police, fire, and ambulance crews are to handle many casualties and problems, the better off we will all be in an emergency situation."

The Department of Homeland Security announced \$1.8 billion in grants today to increase state, urban, and tribal government efforts to improve their readiness, response, and recover capabilities for natural and man-made disasters. Approximately \$39.8 million was appropriated to the Metropolitan Medical Response System Program (MMRS) to be divided up among 124 MMRS jurisdictions around the nation to enhance mass casualty preparedness and response capabilities.

The state of California also received approximately \$110,090,000 million under the State Homeland Security Program to enhance state, territorial and local capabilities through planning, equipment, training, and exercise activities. These funds will be broken down by the state government and 80% of the funding will go directly to localities.